



## **Students' Perception Of Adult Education As A Discipline In Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to determine among other considerations, the influence of sex, types of programmes, areas of study and geographical location on students' perception of Adult Education as a discipline. A sample of 1500 students was drawn from eight faculties randomly selected students. The instrument used for the collection of data was a self-made questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of 40 items, designed to assess the students' perception of Adult Education as a discipline. A significant difference was also found between postgraduate and undergraduate students in their perception of the discipline. The findings also revealed that the mean perception of Arts students was significantly higher than that of the Science students. However, there was no significant difference between students from rural and urban areas in their perception of the discipline. Based on the above findings, it was recommended that the National Universities Commission (NUC) should consider the introduction of Adult Education as a general studies course for undergraduates in all Nigerian Universities, especially to students into non-teaching courses.

**Keywords:** Students, Perception, Adults, Education, Discipline, Sokoto, Nigeria

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adult Education had been available to man long before the formal school system. It is thus the oldest form of education in the world. Akinpelu (1988) stated "that if one accepts the Bible Story of the Garden of Eden, Adam, the first student, was already an adult at creation, and was instructed directly by his creator outside the formal school system". This in fact may be taken as the foundation of Adult Education. Modern adult Education in Nigeria can be dated back to early 1944 when the first Mass Education programme was launched (Indabawa, 1991). Another bold attempt on Adult Literacy Education was also observed in 1949 when a memorandum on fundamental education was circulated by the Department of Adult Education in Lagos (Fafunwa, 1974).

Adult Education as a discipline or course of study began with the founding of the Department of Extra-Mural Studies in 1949 at the then University College, Ibadan. Since then, Adult Education has witnessed

a steady growth. Adult education, as professional area of study, is perhaps the most easily misunderstood and consequently abused and prostituted by all kinds of academic importers and “masquerades” who see it as a non-specialist area to be exploited uncontrollably and without prior orientation. (Oduaran 2003). Furthermore, the nature and scope of the field is yet to be extensively explored to such an extent that information on the discipline could be popularized. As a result of these, one would not be surprised if a considerable number of students at various institutions have negative perception of the discipline. It would be of interest actually to study how students perceive the discipline and identify such factors that influence their perception. After all Universities are but micro-reflection of the wider society. (Kuna 2008) This type of study is actually over due if the discipline, its propagators and practitioners are to assume their important place in the arena of this education. The responsibilities of placing the discipline in its proper place rest squarely on the students and lecturers. This is an attempt in that direction.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As earlier pointed out, adult education has existed for very long time as a field of practice. As a field of academic discipline, it was known in Nigeria as far back as 1949. Despite these facts, adult education remains perhaps the least understood (Akinpelu, 1988). This situation therefore calls for urgent redemption if its limits, scope and ramification are to be properly understood. Personal experience, the verbalization and assertions of highly placed individuals seems to portray due to the fact that a large segment of the public has wrong perception of the discipline. For example, J (2005) asserts that adult education has been regarded as education for old, poor and village people who were not able to go to school. Similarly, Okedara (1981) observed, that as a result of wrong perception, no concern is given to the study of adult education by the various governments. Fajonyomi (1988) believes that adult education has been generally seen as a literacy programme, only so designed to cater for those who missed formal schooling alone.

The question now is how and when are we to correct this misconception? When and through what means will the true nature and understanding of adult education comprehend? We have to start from somewhere and now. Since we cannot leave this huge task to practitioners in other fields, we have to rise up to the challenge. This study asserts that there is relative misconception of adult education among students, the nature and degree of which can only be ascertained through a research study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study is six fold:

- 1 To determine students’ perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 2 To ascertain the influence of gender of the students on their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 3 To ascertain the influence of the type of programme on their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 4 To determine the influence of students’ academic area on their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 5 To ascertain the influence of students’ location on their perception of the discipline.
- 6 To also establish the possible factors that influence there perception in the same way.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

- 1 There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 2 There is no significant difference between undergraduate and postgraduate students in their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 3 There is no significant difference between science and Arts students in their perception of adult education as a discipline.
- 4 There is no significant difference between urban and rural students in their perception of adult education as a discipline.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study was designed to find out students’ perception of adult education as a discipline, the survey designed was used. The instrument designed to be used for the collection of data was a questionnaire. Best and Kahn (2007) writing on the type of instrument appropriate for assessing studies on perception indicated that such an instrument has to be an inventory/questionnaire asking a great number of specific and factual questions. However it should be so devised that it would be possible to draw various comparisons not only for the total population but, also for a particular dimension of the population so selected.

**Population**

The population for this study comprises of all registered full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. Thus, the target population of this study is about 20,000 students.

**Sample and Sampling techniques**

Multi-stages random sampling was adopted in selecting a representative from both science and arts students, among various faculties of these University. The sample was made up of 1,500 randomly selected students from the campus of Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto. Nine hundred and fifty (950) students were selected from the main campus of the University and five hundred and fifty students (550) from the City campus.

**Research Instrument**

The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire titled “Students” Perception of adult Education as a Discipline Questionnaire” (SPADQ). The instrument was divided into two parts. The first part had seven (7) items covering demographic information about the students. The second part contained forty (40) items all designed to assess the perception of students towards adult education as a discipline and the possible factors that influence there perceptions. All positive items were scored on a three point likert scale:

- 3 points = Agree
- 2 points = Agree somehow and
- 1 point = Disagree

The negative items were scored in the reverse order.

**Administration of the Instrument**

The questionnaires were administered to the students of the three institutions. During the distribution of these questionnaire cognizance was given to the fact that there were equal number of male and female, arts and science and post-graduate and undergraduate students. A period of 24 hours was given to the student to respond to the all items in the questionnaire. This was to safeguard complaints in the instrument.

On completion of the questionnaire by the students, they were collected, organized and collated for analysis. Out of one thousand and five hundred (1, 500) questionnaires distributed, one thousand, three hundred and twenty-five (1,325) were returned. Below is the schedule of how the questionnaires were distributed.

**Distribution of Questionnaire**

S/N	Department	Usmanu DanfodiyoUniversity Sokoto	
		Undergraduate	Post-graduate
1.	Accounting	75	25
2.	Agriculture	75	25
3.	Botany	75	25
4.	Biochemistry	75	25
5	Chemistry	75	25
6.	English	75	25
7.	French	75	25
8.	History	75	25

9.	Geography	75	25
10.	Mathematics	75	25
11.	Microbiology	75	25
12.	Physics	75	25
13.	Computer Scie	75	25
14.	Islamic studies	75	25
15.	Sociology	75	25
	Total	1125	375
	Grand total	1500	

**RESULTS**

**Hypothesis 1:**

The first hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of adult Education as a discipline. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 or 5% level of significance. The critical or table value for a two tailed test at the 0.05 level of significance with 1325 degree of freedom (df) is 1.96.

**Table 1. T-Test Analysis of Male and Female Students in their Perception regarding to Adult Education**

Sex	N	X	S.d	Df	T. Cal.	T-crit.
Male	661	92.27	21.63	1323	6.47	1.96
Female	664	83.84	25.64			

\* P 0.05

From the above table the calculated t-value is 6.47, while the critical or table value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value exceeds the critical or table value, we reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Based on the above decision, we conclude that there is significant difference between male and female students in their perception of adult education as a discipline. In other words the perception of male-students is more appropriate than that of the female students.

**Hypothesis 2:**

To test the null hypothesis of no significant difference between postgraduate and undergraduate students in their perception of adult education as a discipline, the t-ratio was used. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 2. T-Test analysis of Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students in their Perception of Adult Education**

Type of programme	N	X	S.d	df	t- Cal.	t-Crit.
Postgraduate	523	93.31	19.03	1323	15.03	1.96
Undergraduate	803	76.03	22.22			

\* P 0.05

The calculated 5-ratio is 15.03 while the critical or table t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the table t-value, we reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis. Based on the above decision we conclude that there is significance difference between postgraduate and undergraduate students in their perception of Adult Education as a discipline in favour of postgraduate students.

**Hypothesis 3:** This hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference between science and arts students in their perception of adult education as a discipline. To test this hypothesis the student's t-test was also used. The level of significance at which this hypothesis was tested was 0.05. the critical tables test at the 0.05 level of significance and 1323 degrees of freedom (df) is 1.96.

**Table 3. T-Test Analysis of Science and Arts Students' Perception Of Adult Education**

Area of study	N	X	S.d	Df	t-Cal.	t-Crit.
Science	603	88.69	21.66	1323	5.62	1.96
Arts	722	82.11	20.69			

\* P 0.05

The above table indicates that the calculated t-value is 5.62 and the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the table or critical value we reject the null hypothesis and uphold the alternative hypothesis. Based on the above decision, we conclude that there is

**Hypothesis 4** There is no significant difference between Science and Arts students in their perception of adult Education as a discipline.

This hypothesis asserted that there was no significant difference between students from rural/urban areas in their perception of Adult Education as a discipline.

**Table 4. T-test analysis of students from rural and urban area of their perception of Adult Education**

Location	N	X	sd	df	t-Cal	t-Crit.
Rural	585	78.33	27.13	1323	0.52	1.96
Urban	740	77.21	27.50			

\* P 0.05

The data in the above table indicate that the calculated t-value is 0.52 while the critical or t-table value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-ratio is less than the t-table value, we do not reject the null hypothesis. The result of the test suggests that the difference between students from rural and urban areas in their perception of Adult education is not statistically significant. The probability that the observed differences resulted from sampling error is higher than 0.05. We therefore conclude that there is no significant difference between students from rural and urban areas in their perception of Adult Education.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study was designed to determine students' perception of Adult Education as a discipline. The results obtained in the study as presented in chapter four are discussed below following the order in which the hypotheses were stated.

### **The Influence of Gender on Students' Perception Of Adult Education.**

This hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference between male and female students in the perception of Adult Education as a discipline. The result of the analysis indicated that a significant difference occurred and gender in the factor of influence in favour of male students. Going in the same direction Okoye (1987) posits that men intrinsically have better brain and learn much better than female.

### **The Influence of Programme on Students' Perception**

The study hypothesized that postgraduate students perceived adult education differently from undergraduate students. The result shows that postgraduate students possessed more favourable perception of adult education as discipline.

By virtue of our educational system Postgraduate students are generally higher than undergraduate students in age and educational experience. Jersild, Telford et al. (1999) proved that perceptual functioning changes with the perceiver's age. Neisser (2001) asserts that difference of knowledge and acquired skills make a greater influence on the perceptual power of the perceiver. The advantages acquired by the postgraduate students as a result of their exposure to various academic areas of study are enough to enable them have better understanding of adult education as a discipline. Similarly Bourne and Ekstrand (1982) re-emphasized the fact that perception of any context becomes more efficient, more selective, more accurate, and more appropriate with the perceiver's age and knowledge.

### **Influence of the Area of study on Students' Perception**

In the study a significant difference was found on the influence of students' academic area of study. The mean perception of students from Arts was found to be higher than the mean perception of students from the Sciences. In other words, differences exist in favour of students from arts courses. Gibson Lyle (1972) asserts that an individual relates what he sees to what he knows. Students from arts courses are closer and more exposed to education students and adult education students. These opportunities enable them to have knowledge or to be acquainted with adult education as a course of study. This probably influenced their perception of adult education as a discipline.

### **The Influence of location on Students' Perception**

The study revealed that there was no significant difference between the perception of students from rural and urban areas towards adult education as a discipline. This does not confirm the view of Tahir and Dibal (1982) who are of the opinion that people from rural areas are more exposed to adult education programmes. The students from urban areas are likely to be more aware of adult education as a discipline through exposure to higher institutions where the courses are offered.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. First, it is strongly recommended that, the National Universities Commission should consider the introduction of Adult Education as a course in General studies for the undergraduate students in Nigerian Universities especially in the non-teaching courses.
2. Second, it is recommended that the administrators and lecturers at various Universities should provide an informative avenue to students of both adult education and non-adult education students to know the relationship between adult education courses and probable job opportunities. This will help to popularize the discipline.
3. The third recommendation is in the area of the training of adult education specialists.

For the discipline to fully evolve efforts should be made to train more Students and lecturers of adult education.

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